

PhD thesis

Authorial representation

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The functioning of the Hungarian Royal Gendarmerier in Somogy comitat
between 1884 and 1914

Subject Supervisor:

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1. Drafting the scientific problem

During my work at the Central Police Station Of Somogy county, my university studies and the researches I made for my university thesis I have learnt that the history of the law enforcement organizations has not been thoroughly elaborated yet. The works published dealing with this topic discuss the certain organizations on country level, and concentrate on a narrow scope of field. However, I am convinced – not degrading the importance of the work of the control centre, of course – that the regional or local organizations accomplished and still accomplish the „actual” criminal investigation work, therefore I hold the elaboration and presentation of their history and accomplished tasks vital, fitting well into the line of military history researches.

Somogy county is a positive exception, because Gyula Berta, a researcher of law enforcement from Kaposvár has accomplished the historical summary of the pandours, the imperial gendarmerie, the police and the law-enforcement relating to the county.

There is only one field of the law enforcement history in the county which has not been revealed yet: the history and functioning of the Hungarian royal gendarmerie, which – as the law enforcement organization just before the present-day organizations – has a special part in the history of law enforcement in „Somogy country”.

In my opinion, the historical scientific research could and must be done essentially by elaborating the original documents being found in the Archives of Somogy county, but the studies and books published in this theme also could not be omitting.

To sum up, my research has been concentrated on the following fields, problems:

- Historical presentation of the law enforcement organizations in Somogy county preceding the Hungarian royal gendarmeier
- The organization and establishment of the Hungarian Royal Gendarmerie in Somogy county
- Presentation of the changes in the relations of the employment and the number of the staff of the organizations of the Hungarian Royal Gendarmerie in Somogy county, and the evaluation of its work considering the interval being researched.

2. Investigational aims:

The main aim of my research is to give an authentic presentation and to show the processing of the history, structural changes and tasks of the organizations of the Hungarian

Royal Gendarmerie working in Somogy county between 1884 and 1914. Within this topic I have the following particular aims:

- To identify exactly the role and function of the Hungarian royal gendarmerie in the law enforcement of Somogy county.
- To present the establishment, development and changes of the organization of the Hungarian royal gendarmerie working in Somogy county, and to examine their achievements. During my work I mostly rely on the documents of the Archives of Somogy county. I handle the publications on this topic, the PhD dissertations presenting the achievements of the field of research, studies as eligible sources.
- To form an objective judgement about the function of the – in my opinion – unfairly forgotten and branded law enforcement organization in its first period.

3. Applied methods of research

My research is primarily based on the processing of the Archives of Somogy county documents referring to the special field of research. And also:

- I have studied and elaborated the national specialized literature and in some cases documents published abroad but relating to Hungary, the legislation and other means of state governing.
- I have examined the practical effectiveness of regulations in connection with the field of research.
- Application of personal experiences and professional knowledge
- Participation in the conferences related to the topic.
- Regular consultation from the field of law-enforcement research with:
 - well-known specialists
 - Zrínyi Miklós Military Academy (ZNMA) History Department
 - The Society of Military History
 - Experts of the Society of Szemere Bertalan

During my research my primary aspect was to strictly keep to the principals of military history research, that is objectivity, historical approach and thorough evidence for my statements.

4. Description of the accomplished investigations by chapters

1st chapter: the institution of the gendarmerier

The effect that the institution of the gendarmerier produced on the modern law-enforcement history – like the Hungarian – gives reasons for surveying the history of the organization. According to that I have divided this chapter into two parts, and analysed its summative conclusions:

1st part: On the territory of the Hungarian Monarchy – like on the other parts of the empire – the gendarmerier was called into life by the Habsburg neoabsolutism which used the gendarmerier working in Lombardy after the Napoleonic wars as a model.

In the case of our country the Compromise was a turning-point, because on 31st May, 1867 the Hungarian provincial headquarters of the gendarmerier were liquidated. However, in the other partner-countries of the Monarchy – like Croatia and Transylvania – they carried on working.

In this part I have:

- made clear the circumstances of the establishment of the imperial gendarmerier
- looked through the organizational changes of the imperial gendarmerier

2nd part: After withdrawing the imperial gendarmerier from Hungary the defence of the public order became an internal affair of the country again. The organization of the pandours controlled by the comitats were restored. However, the circumstances were not the same any longer.

The extremely backward economic- social conditions first were in the process of disintegration then an inconsistent capitalist development began.

By the 1870s the public-security conditions of the dualist Hungary declined. The comitat-type law-enforcement was not suitable for the new circumstances.

Under the pressure of changing Kálmán Tisza presented a reorganization plan of the gendarmerier to the Cabinet in August of 1880. It led to enact two laws:

- II. act/1881 of 'amplification of the gendarmerier staff', and
- II. act/1881 of 'organization of public safety service'

During the tasks of the organization the Transylvanian gendarmerie was used as an example, and according to this six gendarme districts were established between 1881 and 1884.

The organization was under the control of the Ministry of Defence and the Interior all along: the personal matters were the duty of the previous ministry, the service matters were handled by the latter.

In 1903 – respecting the achievements of the organization – the establishment of additional three districts (in Brassó, Debrecen and Szombathely) were decided, but the Szombathely district could not be established because of financial reasons.

During the I. World War the duty of the gendarmerie increased. By 1917 the skilled and reliable staff was sent to the front as a part of the military police, only some sub-officers were left in the districts.

During the post-war revolutions the gendarmerie was dissolved: the officers were discharged with an enforced pension, while their men were put on the unattached list.

The gendarmerie reorganized by the pressure of the Triple Entente started working in a modified and modernized form.

During the II. World War the gendarmerie did its duty of security and public safety like in the earlier war, but when the battles spreaded over the Hungarian area, the gendarme units were put into action as fighting forces, for which there was no precedent in the earlier war.

The gendarmerie – together with the police and the army – took its share of the Jewish deportation, and this caused a negative judgement of the whole organization later.

The fighting Hungarian Royal Gendarmerie was ousted from the country's territory in April 1945, and its more than 60-year-old function came to an end.

During the discussion of the Hungarian royal gendarmerie I have:

- Presented the course of events which resulted in the establishment of the Hungarian Royal Gendarmerie
- Cleared up those ages which were important in terms of the Hungarian Royal Gendarmerie.

2nd Chapter: The Hungarian Royal Gendarmerier in Somogy comitat

While the first chapter discussed the matter of the Hungarian Royal Gendamerier from the point of view of the country and the empire, the second chapter is surveying the history of the comitat's law-enforcement organization in three parts, from the establishment of the Hungarian Royal Gendarmerier to the end of the following period.

1st part: In Somogy comitat the organization of the pandours was established in 1766 with a staff of 40 people to overtake the public safety duties of the Haiduk. The number of the staff multiplied later.

The organization was independent, being subordinated only to the comitat. Its duties and obligations were regulated several times by the administrative staff of the comitat.

The pandours took part in arms in the fighting of the war of independence 1848-49 in the area of the comitat.

After the repression of the war of independence the organization of the pandours was eliminated in the whole country – as well as in Somogy comitat – on 1st of October 1850, and its duties were taking over by the units of the imperial gendarmerier. However, on 30th of December 1850 the pandours were put into operation again, because the gendarmerier was unable to overcome the chaotic public safety situations; but as they were considered to be unreliable because of their behaviour in the war of independence, the pandours could perform their duties only together with the imperial gendarmerier. During the concerted actions the pandours adopted the station system of the imperial gendarmerier – although with another name – and from 1863 stations of the pandours were set up instead of the earlier, concentrated system.

From the withdrawing of the imperial gendarmerier from the country to the beginning of the operation of the Hungarian Royal Gemdamerier in the comitat – for about 21 year – the pandours became the safeguard of the public order in the comitat.

The changing of the comitat's law-enforcement was at issue during the war of independence, and after the comitat got into the hands of the Austrians it was put on the agenda immediately, although the switching-over to the gendarmerier system was not urged.

The imperial gendarmerier – more exactly its 5th and later its 6th regiment – started its work in the comitat in the summer of 1850. Its organization – which became a model for the Hungarian Royal Gendarmerier later – was linear with a hierachy of patrol-platoon-troop.

The Hungarians – as well as the inhabitants of the comitat – always considered them oppressors, and it is true that their main duty was that in the first period. It was due to this fact that the public safety of the comitat collapsed.

The organization, which became a real organization of the criminal investigation later, could stabilize the public safety conditions of the comitat only together with the pandours whose duty had been cancelled earlier, but to call them into action again became a necessity.

As far as I know, nowadays in Hungary the only monument which was erected to the memory of the later devoted and generous work of the imperial gendarmerier can be found next to the village of Somodor in Somogy county.

Although the imperial gendarmerier was withdrawn from the country after the Compromise of 1867, its memories did not disappear without a trace, the gendarmerier still working in Transsilvania became a sample for the Hungarian royal gendarmerier later.

In connection with the pandours and the imperial gendarmerier operating in Somogy comitat I have:

- placed and interpreted the role of the imperial gendarmerier and the pandours in the history of the comitat;
- looked through the operation of the pandours and defined its periods;
- studied the relations of the placing and the effective force of the pandours;
- defined the units of the imperial gendarmerier serving in the comitat;
- made clear the relations of the placing and the effective force of the imperial gendarmerier;
- studied the effects of the organization produced on the contemporary pandours and the later Hungarian royal gendarmerier;
- searched for the monument commemorating to the imperial gendarmerier in Somodor, and placed the circumstances of its erection into the history of the comitat's law-enforcement.

2nd part: In Somogy county the gendarmerier – VI. (Székesfehérvár) gendarme district 3rd (Pécs) wing 2nd (Kaposvár) platoon – started its public safety service with 1 officer and 114 men of the rank and file on 1st of January 1884. The men were dislocated in 24 stations besides the platoon-commandership of Kaposvár.

However, this one-platoon leadership soon proved to be insufficient in the relation of 'Somogycountry', so on 1st of June 1884 another platoon-commandership was established in Marcali, and this system remained unchanged until 1893. But not in the case of the effective force, by 1893 instead of the earlier 23 stations 34 stations were operating with 2 officers and 173 men.

On 1st of January 1893 the third platoon was established with a head-quarter in Csurgó, but Somogy still was not supervised by an independent wing, it belonged to Pécs. But you had to wait only a year, and on 1st of January 1894 the 5th (Kaposvár) wing was established, and then this three-platoon system remained unchanged until the end of the period under survey. However, the head-quarters of the platoon-commanderships were changing constantly.

By 1914 the effective force of the organization of the gendarmerie in Somogy county was 238 with 4 officers.

By studying the dislocation of the Hungarian Royal Gendarmerie in the county and the relations of the effective force changing parallel with it, I have uncovered and proved:

- the effect of the legal predecessor organizations produced on the gendarmerie of the comitat;
- the gendarmerie organization was characteristic of a continuous change – a kind of development – suitable for the outer conditions in the period under survey;
- intervals of the changes of the organization and the effective force.
- I have made clear and analysed the steps of the gendarme platoons in connection with the organization, and gave those changes of the effective force to them which were resulted from them.

3rd chapter: The Hungarian Royal Gendarmerie in Somogy comitat

In this chapter I have discussed the work of the gendarme organization with high priority. To arrive at a proper understanding of it, first I have presented the basic organizational unit, the gendarme post and the different services performed there, then I have looked through the statistical records used for measuring the period work indexes, later on by using these records – and by the help of the modern methods – I have analysed and evaluated the work which was fulfilled to improve the public safety conditions.

1st part: In Somogy comitat – following the conditions of the field of activity – the gendarme posts were made up of foot-soldiers until 1913. The effective force – 4-6 people – was behind the national average. However, the posts perfectly fitted into the settlement structure of the comitat, because by keeping the number of the men on the minimum level more posts could be established, and more territories could be under control.

The forces of the gendarme posts saw the **normal service** without any special orders, which meant the permanent patrol of the field of activity.

During the cooperation of the gendarmerier and the civil authorities the **requests or rendered services due to requests** were fulfilled, and the **control service** was the duty of the post-leader.

The duty within the posts was not discussed in details, because it was of only complementary – or with the modern terminology of the word, logistic –importance, which could not be neglected, of course, but in the respect of the theme of the representation I think it is irrelevant.

2nd part: Relating to the statistic system, the period from 1884 to 1903 and the following period can be distinguished clearly. Both periods were characteristic of monthly data-supply, but in the first one it was supplemented with text, and contained the events and the orders only occasionally.

The statistic forms contained six parts:

- impeachment
- attachment
- other events and acts
- rendered service
- other service
- charts of infectious diseases.

In the second period the statistics did not contain text, and the data-supply followed the V.act/1848 of criminal acts and milder crimes as well as the XL.act/1879 of offences, even if there was a negative case.

The statistic forms contained two parts:

- cases

- individuals

Relating to the cases two categories were distinguished, 'occured' and 'detected', while in the cases of the individuals there were the categories of 'captured' (arrested) and 'reported'.

The statistic system mentioned above – regarding the occurred and detected cases – was suitable for measuring the criminal indexes: case- and detection efficiency. I have measured these indexes in the next part.

3rd part: Unfortunately, besides the statistical data there are few details of the activity of the gendarmerier during the period under survey. These details are official statements from the quarterly valuations of the deputy-lieutenant of the comitat, most of them – as a kind of appreciation of the work of the gendarmerier – are statements about the stability of the personal and material security. Consequently, my analysis could be limited to mathematical data, and during my analysis I have conformed to the periods that were concluded by the valuation of the statistical data-supply, and I have stressed the importance of those indexes – larceny, armed robbery, conflagration – which continuity was characteristic of both periods.

During the analysis of the statistical data I have revealed an interesting anomaly considering the occurred cases and separating the two data-supply systems from each other sharply. The number of the cases in the second period multiplied many times. Regarding to the fact that in both periods the same laws defined the offences, milder crimes and violations, this anomaly can not be explained by the changing of the legal setting, presumably, it was due to the changing of the statistical system.

The efficiency of the solved and detected cases is impressive.

In this part I have :

- systematized those forms of service which had to be performed by the gendarme posts and their gendarmeriers day by day;
- introduced and put those statistical systems into chronological order which were written about their duties;
- using the modern analytical and evaluative methods – regarding the changing of the statistical system – I have surveyed, systematized the results and drew conclusions from them.

5. Summerizing conclusions

Today the law-enforcement in Hungary is the duty of the Police, the Border Guards and the Board of Customs and Excise. However, regarding the political wish, by the integration of the Border Guards the Police is the only law-enforcement agency which is qualified for defending public security.

Nowdays it is difficult to understand the characteristic conditions of the surveyed period, the organizations of the Hungarian Royalty that were qualified for law-enforcement, because they were so multi-coloured.

There were the following organizations:

Polices

Hungarian Royal Gendarmerier

Hungarian Royal Board of Excise

Custom-office

The Guards

Hungarian Royal Guard of the Crown

The Guard of the House

Penal authorities.

From the organizations mentioned before the polices and the Hungarian Royal Gendarmerier performed public safety duties.

The plural form of the word 'police' is just an apparent anomaly because in the surveyed period there was **state police** only in the capital, or more exactly the Hungarian Royal Frontier Police and the State Police of Fiume could be ranked among them too. **Municipal police** could work in the municipal boroughs and the corporate towns.

During the service of public safety, from the point of view of the range of activity, the countryside was within the competence of the gendarmerier, while in the municipal boroughs their own polices fulfilled this duty. In the case of corporate towns there were anomalies: it occurred that they operated an own police, or the gendarmerier was requested for service, but sometimes you could find ambiguous situations when some duties were performed by the police and others by the gendarmerier. However, as a common principle using the gendarmerier in this way was possible only for compensation. (The capital of

Somogy country, Kaposvár became a corporate town in 1872, and from this time it operated an own police.)

During the surveyed period there was an important change also in the mentality of people, because the centuries-old, traditional pandours' organization of the comitat, which survived even the Austrian gendarmerie, was totally eliminated unreversibly, its place was undertaken by the Hungarian royal gendarmerie organized and controlled centrally, and its control was not the exclusive sphere of authority of the comitat any longer. But as opposed to the Austrian gendarmerie, the Hungarian gendarmerie was not foreign.

The Hungarian royal gendarmerie started its work in the country not as a new organization because it rooted in the organization of the pandours from one hand, and the Austrian gendarmerie from the other hand. It undertook the most useful characteristics of each organizations. As for the results – most of them can not be reproduced today even with the modern means of technics – they speak for themselves; it can be said that the characteristics considered so useful were those indeed.

To sum up and summarize the experiences I personally hold as most important, during their functioning in Somogy comitat from 1884 to 1914 the Hungarian royal gendarmerie:

- Was suitable for fulfilling public safety service and managing the special conditions of the comitat;
- Its organization and effective force changed dynamically according to the requirements of the circumstances of the field of activity;
- Worked independently, next to and together with the local government;
- Its role in the history of the Hungarian law-enforcement had a crucial importance, its activity furnished a reliable basis for the social and economic development of the comitat;
- The data about its activity clearly indicates that this organization being supported by proper legal background and degree of supply was effective and successful.

These conclusions are thought-provoking because the topic of the gendarmerie was treated as a taboo for years. It was not approved of – and in many cases it is still disapproved – bringing to light topics connecting to the Hungarian royal gendarmerie during the researches of the history of the law-enforcement agencies, although the police today still acts on the same principles considering the organization of the service and the stationing of men.

6. New scientific results

On the basis of the research made in the topic of my dissertation, its systematization and analysis in my PhD thesis I word the following scientific results:

- During the archival research work I revealed the authentic history of those organizations of the Hungarian royal gendarmerier which worked in Somogy comitat between 1884 and 1914;
- I have defined the organizational structure and effectice force provision in the covert period, and the different periods of the statistical system;
- I have introduced and systematized in details the organizational and effective force-changes of the platoons and their superior organ, the wing serving in the comitat;
- I have analyzed and evaluated the statistical indexis of the period, made clear the characteristics and peculiarities of the statistical data-supply, and according to this:
- I have proved that the function of the gendarmerier created satisfactory public safety conditions in the comitat.

8. The applicability of the dissertation

In my view the applicability of my dissertation is as follows:

- The elaboration of the operation of the Hungarian Royal Gendarmerier in the region can be thought-provoking for the law-enforcement forces of the other Hungarian counties so that they can keep in mind they work in a formation which has centuries-long history.
- What the earlier generations thought about public safety, what kind of conditions they worked under and how they could achieve more or less success.
- What conclusions they drew from their success, and how they corrected the organization according to the changing circumstances.

During the consultations I would like to validate the experiences gained during my researches.

Besides this the results of my research can contribute to the teaching of the curriculum dealing with the topic of the Hungarian royal gendarmerier in :

- Police Academy

- Police vocational schools
- Zrínyi Miklós National Defence University
- Vocational schools providing public safety education.

Kaposvár, 3rd February 2009.

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